



# RFCI

JUNE 2020

TAMPA BAY CHAPTER of the  
RARE FRUIT COUNCIL INTERNATIONAL,  
INC.

<http://www.rarefruit.org>

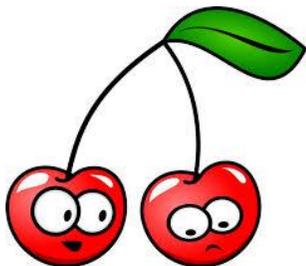
[Tampa.Bay.RFCI@gmail.com](mailto:Tampa.Bay.RFCI@gmail.com)

<http://www.facebook.com/TampaBayChapterRareFruitCouncilIntlInc>

Meetings are held the second Sunday, 2:00 P.M.  
at the American Legion Post 111,  
6918 N. Florida Ave, Tampa 33604

## ∞ Upcoming Programs and Events ∞

**No meeting for June.** Due to the current Covid-19 situation, the Club meeting for June has been cancelled.



Please watch the Club website and the newsletter for details concerning future meetings. The situation will be assessed again for July.

Our next Club meeting is scheduled for July 12th. We will carefully monitor what is happening and communicate to you how it may affect future meetings. Please follow the health guidelines of local, state, and federal agencies and stay healthy.

We sincerely hope all our members and their families are both safe and healthy.

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Keep smiling and keep growing!



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President: Fred Engelbrecht; Vice Presidents: Cora Coronel and Kenny Gil; Secretary: Jager Mitchell; Treasurer: Susan McAveety; Newsletter/Membership: Denise Provencher

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## ∞ What's Happening ∞

by Paul Zmoda

Most mornings find me outdoors collecting *Annona* pollen and then hand pollinating receptive flowers.

It looks like no takes on our first white *Ilama* blooms but the pink fruiting mother tree is setting just fine.

The African custard apple will set every flower I pollinate. If I don't hand pollinate, I rarely get fruit because the specialized insects that do the job in other countries aren't found here.

I've been grafting starfruit, persimmons, white sapote, and pawpaw trees with high success. Rooted grape cuttings got potted up and went to customers' homes.



I made my first batch of mayhaw jelly and it turned out wonderfully. It's very easy to make with only four ingredients: the fruit, water, pectin and sugar.

New planting: papaya

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*Did you know that.....?*

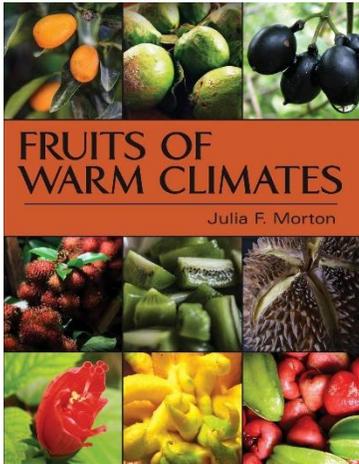
Some of Florida's biggest fruit crops today are well travelled, originating from other parts of the globe.

Citrus originated in Southeast Asia.

Strawberries came from a chance genetic mix between a plant from the Mid-Atlantic states, and a plant from Chile that crossed in France.



Tomatoes originated in the Andes Mountains of South America, made their way to Europe, and then crossed the Atlantic into North America with settlers.



Member Belle Shenoï would like to add one of her favorite reads to the list of fruit related books published in last month's newsletter:

**Fruits of warm climates.** By Julia F. Morton, Miami, FL

*Fruits of Warm Climates* is the encyclopedia for those who want to know! In one definitive volume, Morton explores the world of tropical and subtropical fruit, providing information on the history of the plants, cultivation techniques, food and alternative uses, nutrition, varieties, and much more. Written in a professional yet accessible voice, *Fruits of Warm Climates* is a must-have for anyone interested in tropical horticulture.

Valuable for researchers as well as home and commercial growers, *Fruits of Warm Climates* masterfully packages the essential information on familiar and not-so-familiar tropical fruit. With over 400 pages containing hundreds of images, the volume is overflowing with information on countless varieties of fruits. Years after its original publication, *Fruits of Warm Climates* remains a leading text on the subject and the pinnacle work of economic botanist Julia F. Morton. It is an important resource for every agricultural, research, and science library.

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## The fruit and vegetable "Who am I" game – answers on page 47

1. Sometimes people make a juice out of me, but don't drink me too often or you'll turn orange!
  2. When Columbus landed in the new world, he thought he was in India so he called the natives "Indians." He was told to bring back spices, so guess what he called me?
  3. In Germany, people who first grew me tried to eat my leaves, but they tasted terrible. They almost gave up on me till they tried my tubers!
  4. When you cook me, I will weep and sigh.
  5. I used to be called a love apple, and people thought I was poisonous. Now I'm on your pizza.
  6. Russians ferment me to make Vodka. Hint: I'm not a grape.
  7. I was taken out of the wild in Europe and turned into all of the following: kale, broccoli, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, kohlrabi, collards.
  8. I grow in huge plantations in Hawaii, but I'm an immigrant from South America.
  9. I came from India, and I'm very sour.
  10. Native Americans ground me into a "meal" and used me for baking.
  11. If you've eaten me, you've also probably eaten the tiny wasp that died inside my fruit.
  12. I am a North American, and am one of the very few blue foods.
  13. I am incorrectly called a berry, and my seeds sit on the outside of a pulpy cushion.
  14. I have a mutant relative, the nectarine, that isn't fuzzy.
  15. My kind of fruit is called a "pome", and that's my real name in French.
  16. I might be used to scare people in the Autumn, but I also make a great tasting pie!
  17. My family can "fix" nitrogen in my roots, so growing me actually improves your soil!
  18. People eat my flowers, and they love my heart, but I am thorny so be careful.
  19. When a blight destroyed my crop, thousands of Irish starved and left their homeland for the New World.
  20. Wheat, rice, corn, oats, barley, millet, and bamboo are all members of this family. Without us, most humans would go hungry. What is our family called?
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*From the editor and the seed chairman,*

Hope everyone is healthy and safe as these strange times continue. Many of us have taken the opportunity to do work on our homes and gardens, and if the huge crowds at Lowe's are any indication, that is a lot of us!

March was a crazy month for us as we moved to our new home. We had the delightful task of moving approximately 2000 plants, 10,000 containers, benches, racks, and 5 greenhouses. It was an arduous task that took the entire month of March.

Despite the hard labor of such work, we managed to find moments of calm and reflection as we worked amongst our plants. There are many plants in our collection that came from other members of the Club and have special meaning for us. As we were moving these plants and trees, it was amazing to note how they have grown, and the experience gave us time to consider the memory of the person or situation from which the plant was acquired.

The Surinam Cherry and Cherry of the Rio Grande were both obtained at the Club meeting plant raffles as offerings from our founding member Bob Heath. Although he is no longer with us, it is a pleasure to recall what an inspiration he was and the knowledge he had of fruits. We continue to enjoy the cherries, and these fruits also have provided the seeds for new plants that we have shared with other members. Bob's memory continues to live on this way.

The enormous multi-trunked papaya, a plant raffle winning from Bill Vega had burst its pot and grown into the ground long ago, and will have to stay with the property. But, over the years, we've saved many seeds and started young plants for the seed table and plant raffle. Chances are if you got papaya seeds at the seed table in recent years, or plants at the raffle table, they may have been from Bill's papaya. Bill was such an incredibly devoted member to the Club's efforts. We will always miss him.

A jicama vine thriving in a large tub, from a plant provided from member and past Club President Thom Scott years ago, has provided its bounty for us and for many other Club members. Thom is also remembered every time we enjoy this plant.

The two good-size starfruit trees in large tubs were from Charles Novak. Charles and Linda were an enormous inspiration to us to join the Club long ago, and we learned quite a bit from Charles about gardening in central Florida. The huge pomegranate was also from Charles, but it grows in the ground, so the new owner of the property will now get to enjoy the large fruits.

The Fuerte avocado was a gift from Jerry and Cora Coronel, and has also gotten quite large in its tub. The tree first fruited last season, hopefully we will get a fruit this year as well.

The white sapote has gotten surprisingly large, and we had to trim it to get it into the U-Haul. This tree was from Jim and Sally Lee.

The guava shrub is full and round in its tub, and it had been a winning in a plant raffle years ago, and was provided by Paul Branesky. It flowers and fruits reliably.

The sugar apples in their containers are all healthy and growing quickly. Some are now 10 feet tall. One of the purple ones had provided a fruit when the plant was only one foot tall! All these plants came from seed provided by Paul Zmoda. So many of these seeds have hopefully provided other members with trees as well, as the seeds from Paul's trees are regularly on the seed table.

Another tree, also from Paul Zmoda, that we couldn't take with us was the native plum. The once tiny plant is now a traffic stopping burst of white flowers in the spring garden and a full size, beautiful tree that will be missed.



This sharing of plants, seeds, and information is what the Club is about. It's the best way to learn how to grow directly from those who have already experienced how to grow these plants in the Tampa area.

Hopefully, our meetings will resume soon, and comradery, seed table, and plant raffles can begin once again, and more memories made for members.

See you soon!

Denise and Bryon Provencher - editor and seed chairman

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**Answers to the question game on page 44**

Answers: 1. carrot 2. hot peppers 3. potato 4. eggplant 5. tomato 6. grain or potato 7. cabbage 8. pineapple 9. lemon 10. corn 11. fig 12. blueberry 13. strawberry 14. peach 15. apple 16. pumpkin  
17. beans 18. artichoke 19. potato 20. the grasses

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**∞ Club Notes ∞**

**Your submissions** for the newsletter, pictures, notes of interest, events, tips, recipes, questions, etc. are especially needed - please send them to [bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com)  
Submissions for the next newsletter due by: **June 22nd**.

Note: The election of the new board members will be rescheduled when regular meetings resume.

If anyone knows of a farm stand that sells lychee fruit, or a U-pick farm for lychees, please let me know: [bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:bdprovencher@tampabay.rr.com)

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**∞ Membership information ∞****NEW MEMBERS**

Download and fill out a membership application from: <https://rarefruit.org/membership/>,  
and send with check or money order for \$20 made out to Tampa Bay RFCI to:  
Tampa Bay RFCI, 12722 Prosser Rd., Dade City, FL 33525

**RENEWING MEMBERS**

Send check or money order for \$20 made out to Tampa Bay RFCI and mail to:  
Tampa Bay RFCI, 12722 Prosser Rd., Dade City, FL 33525

**Please note as of March 1<sup>st</sup>, please send memberships to the new address above. We have moved!**

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***The objectives of The Tampa Bay Rare Fruit Council International:***

*To inform the public about the merits and uses of fruits common to this region and encourages the cultivation, collection, propagation and growth of fruits that are exotic or unusual to west central Florida. The club also encourages the development of new fruit varieties, cooperating with local and foreign agricultural agencies.*

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Tampa Bay RFCI  
12722 Prosser Rd.  
Dade City, FL 33525